

(17)
CORDIAL-MEDIATOR,
for ACCORDANCE of 8
BRETHREN,

THAT

Are of different Judgments and wayes of Administration
in things that concerne the Kingdome of God : For re-
pairing of the breach, and restoring of the paths for many generations

WHEREIN

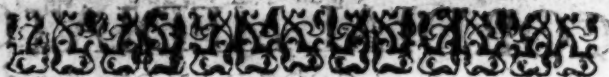
Is proposed the way and means (not to inforce or compell
to an outward dissembling, hypocriticall uniformity, which is all that
can be inforced unto by humane authority, but) to induce and in-
gage to a Cordiall uniformity even of soule and spirit amongst all
that are truly and really Christians ; and to bring them like-
wise into the same wayes and ministrations in the things of God.

*For this is the Message that ye have heard from the Beginning, that we
should love one another : Not as Cain who was of the Evil one, and slew
his Brother ; and wherefore slew he him ? because his own works were evil,
and his Brother's righteous, 1 John 3. 11, 12.*

*We are of God : he that loveth God, heareth us, he that is not of God, heareth
not : whereby know we the spirit of truth, & the spirit of error 1 Joh. 4. 6.
If ye love me keep my Commandments, Joh. 14. 15, see also vers. 16, 17.
He that is of God, heareth Gods words : Therefore hear them not, because
ye are not of God, Joh. 8. 47.*

Written by **ELLIS BRADSHAW.**

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at the Castle in Cornhill, also by *Henry Crips* at the end of Paper-head-
 Alley, and by *Thomas Bennet* at the three Bibles in Tabb-
 Church-yard, 1658.



To his Highnesse *Richard* the now Lord Protector,
together with the Parliament of the Common-
wealth of *England, Scotland, and Ireland*, with
the dominions thereunto belonging.

May it please your Highnesse, together with the Honourable
Parliament, &c.



Here present you in the name of God, &
of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
with a short Epitomie of that fiery
law, and that everlasting Gospell
(*Dent. 33. 2. and Rev. 14. 6.*) which
shall be preached to them that dwell
on the earth, and to every nation, and kinred, and
tongue, and people, and that immediately upon the
downfall of *Babylon*, see vers. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. as
by reading these 6 verses you may plainly see, for af-
ter the Angell flying in the midst of Heaven, having
the everlasting Gospell, &c. The next that followed
proclaimed *Babylon* is fallen, is fallen, &c. And so
the third Angell followeth threatning the Judgment
and wrath that should certainly befall them that wor-
shipped the Beast and his Image, or receive his mark
in their foreheads, or on their hands, see vers. 9, 10,
11, 12. And that all these things are the successe or
effects or at least part thereof upon the 7th Angell
sounding of his Trumpet, see Chap. 11. 15. And
that time shall be no longer till the mystery of God be
finished, but till the seventh Angell should sound his
Trumpet, see the Oath of the Angell, Chap. 10, 5, 6, 7.
And this 14. Chapter being held forth to us as part of

DEDICATORY.

(3)

the effects upon the 7th Angells sounding, as that by reading the Chapters is cleere and manifest; I shall not need to make any further proof that Babilon shall fall upon the holding forth of the everlasting Gospel. I mean when it is so preached and so received as the everlasting Gospel, for such is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it is both a Gospel to wit glad-tidings, and it is the Gospel, the glad-tidings, to wit the only glad-tidings that are everlasting; to them that dwell on the earth, and therefore shall be preached to every nation, kinred, and tongue, and people; Saying (more-over) fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him which hath made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountaines of waters, see Chap. 14. 6, 7. And this also is Gospel, for it is glad-tidings when the hour of his Judgment is come, and his advice is good, to fear God, &c. And in regard he is said to say it with a loud voyce. It is intimated that it should be more audibly spoken, and more generally heard and received then it had been formerly, and that by all nations, kinreds, tongues, and peoples. And it may not be unprofitable to consider, that it is said and sworn by the Angell, that in the dayes of the voyce of the 7th Angell, when he shall begin to sound the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the Prophets, see Chap. 10. 7. Not that all should be finished when he shall begin to sound; for in that there is a beginning it implieth a continuance; And it is said also that in the dayes of the voyce &c. the mystery of God shall be finished: Now how many dayes the voyce of this sounding shall continue it is not easily determined, being only held forth in the plural number without limitation: But this is certain,

that when he shall begin, his sounding shall continue till the mystery of God be finished.

Now see the first effects or what is fully concluded on, and voted in the Church, and by the four and twenty Elders when the 7th Angell begun to sound Chap. 11. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. And it evidently appeareth, that the Kingdoms of this world shall certainly become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall (thenceforth) reign for ever and ever. For which there is thanks rendered by the holy Elders, because he had taken to him his great power, and had reigned, and how, the nations were angry, &c. see and read the verses, for they doe concern us if we be christians indeed, and not in shew only, and that in these dayes, and for our great comfort and encouragement in the wayes of God, they are held forth to us. For hath he not begun, hath he not already taken to himselfe even his great power, and hath reigned amongst us; Hath he not given a bannor to them that fear him, Psal. 60. 4. Hath he not begun, and shall he not make an end, 1 Sam. 3. 12. Hath he not already whett his glittering sword, and hath not his hand already taken hold of vengeance; And shall he not fully recompence his adversaries, and repay them that hate him, see Deuter. 32. 40, 41, 42, 43. And hath he not owned this nation, yea even this of England, and that as first, yea and also above others, yea even any nation now under Heaven; And that for his own cause sake, though not for our worthinesse, but for respect to his name, the which through his grace was owned by us against his adversaries; Yea and that by a strong hand, and a stretched out arme, many a time giving victory to a few against their double number, and that to weake and despised ones against the strong and potent, and that beyond our hopes and expectations, or the fears of our adversaries, and that by sea and land. And why should we
thinke

think that he will repent him for his choice of us before any nation now under heaven. The Apostle telleth us his gifts and callings are without repentance, Rom. 11. 29. And though he will obliterate the names of such out of his book of life (as he said unto Moses) who sin against him (Exod. 32. 32, 33.) yet he will be mercifull unto his land and to his people. And therefore he saith : Rejoyce oh ye nations with his people, for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be mercifull to his land and people, see Dent. 32. 43. And of this we may be confident that he that hath begun will certainly make an end, before he break off from us whom he hath owned as a peculiar people in a nationall way, and that above any nation under heaven, as once he did to Israel of old. And will bring us to rest and settlement in spite of all opposers, either forraine or domestick. And he will give victory on the Lambs side, together with them who are the called, & chosen and faithfull. His heart is towards the governors of Israel, who have jeopardied their lives (to maintaine his cause) upon the high places of the field; with Zebulon and Naphtali, see Judges 5. 9. 18. for they offered themselves willingly amongst the people, and have not loved their lives even unto the death, Rev. 12. 11. And therefore rejoyce ye heavens (that is to say ye Churches, militant and triumphant) and ye that dwell in them, but woe to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the Sea; (that is to the world.) for the Devill is come downe amongst you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time, vers. 12. to wit, till he must be inclosed in the bottomlesse pit, that he shall not deceive the nations any more till a thousand years shall be fulfilled, see Rev. 20. 1, 2, 3. Tea woe unto the world because of offences, for (though) it must needs be that offences

THE EPISTLE

offences shall come, yet woe to that man by whom the offence cometh, see *Mat. 18. 7.* Doublesse it hath ever been dangerous to give any offence either to Jew, or Gentile, or to the Church of God, see *1 Cor. 10. 32.* but much more now in these latter dayes wherein the Lord hath begun to avenge his Elect, who cry unto him day and night, for now he hath begun, he will certainly hold on, and avenge them speedily, as hath been proved before, *Luke 18. 7, 8.* And therefore it is the advice of our blessed Saviour, to take heed that we despise not one of those little ones, yea one of the least of those little ones that beleve in him, and the reason is rendred, because that in heaven there Angels doe alwayes behold the face of their Father which is in Heaven; For they are all ministering spirits sent forth for the good of them who shall be heires of salvation; and will readily accomplish what the will of God shall require them to doe. For they alwayes behold his face to know his will concerning his servants, that they might accomplish it concerning all his Elect over whom they have Charge, see *Matth. 18. 10.* *Mark 9. 42.* *Heb. 1. 14.* *Psal. 103. 20.*

Now if it be, so much danger to offend but one of the least of those little ones, that beleve in Christ, as that it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were cast into the depth of the Sea, &c. How dangerous is it to offend his Embassadors that are sent unto us in the name of the Lord, for the good of our souls; Is it not said, He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me; And he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me; But how few is there in these our dayes that regard these words, or at least so regard them as to caution them as they ought in these respects. Are not the words of men in
 autho-

DEDICATORY.

(7)

authority as Magistrates and Officers, and masters much more regarded then these words of Christ. They that are under command, under any authority, either civill or military, will quickly say we are so commanded, and we must obey else it will be worse for us, we shall be turned out of office, or out of our service, or places else, or those our superiours will be offended with us, and for such like reasons which in such cases are good and wise, and but our duty, but how few is there that are so wisely subservient to the commands of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to take his counsells and admonitions, and lay them to heart, and own them as a rule for regulation of all their wayes. But if you please to read with seriousnessse of spirit, but this little Treatise, you will easily perceiue how much we are short of obedience, and subseruencie to the commands of Christ, yea even the best of us all, and so what need there is to make it our businesse to indeavour a redresse, what in us lyeth, in our places and callings, and to provoke one another to love and good works which are so much wanting. And for this end I have directed it to you who are in highest authority, though I therein speak not to you only, but to all that are or professe themselves to be Christians indeed, & not in shew only: that you & all such might incourage and induce what in them lieth to a cordiall conformity of hearts and affections in the wayes of God. For though it is a thing that cannot possibly be compelled to by humane authority, yet it much conduceth and helpeth forward when the eyes of authority are bent that wayes. The incouragement of authority in well doing, is a strong inducement to the doing of it. And so is likewise their own example no lesse available with ingenuous spirits, see 1 Pet. 2. 14. The Lord grant that you may make it your businesse when you come to deale in matters of religion. To accord our differences as much as may be, and to settle
peace

(D)

THE EPISTLE, &c.

peace both in Church and state, what in you lyeth; And
in so doing the Lord will assist you and bleſſe your in-
deavours for the good of these nations to all posterities:
which is the earnest desire of

Your Cordiall Subject

Ellis Bradshaw.

I Desire the Reader to mend these *Errata*s following, and to make
the residue fence in the reading, *to wit.* Page 6. line 4. for *on* read
or. Page 8. line 30, for *state* read *save.* Page 13. line 26, for *miss them*
hand, read *twice them with the hand.* Page 31. line 4, for *consecrate* read
consoiate, and line 26. for *hear* read *heavens,*

A
CORDIAL - MEDIATOR,
FOR

Accordance of Brethren that are of different Judgements, and wayes of Administration in things that concern the Kingdom of God : For repairing of the breach and restoring of the paths for many Generations, as followeth, *to wit.*



BELOVED brethren, the end of this discourse, I shall in few words first declare with the grounds thereof before I begin, because I love not prolixity nor would not be mistaken, *to wit.*

1. That all the elect and beloved of God that know one another and in the Judgement of charity account one another, *such might love one another as brethren, and that with a pure heart fervently.* See my ground for this. 1 Pet. 1. 22.

2. That all that are in truth, in the light, might *so walk in the light, as to have fellowship one with another.* So as the blood of Jesus Christ might cleanse us from all sin. See my ground for this, 1 John 1. 7. And the rather because that if we say that we have fellowship with God and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth. See ver. 6. And if we walk in the light, we have fellowship one with another; &c. So that we cannot demonstrate that we have fellowship with God and the Lord Jesus Christ, unless we also have fellowship one with another. And therefore cannot say with the Apostle, *to wit,* And truly our fellowship is with the father,

and with his son *Iesus Christ*. See ver. 3. Neither can we demonstrate that we are in the light, nor that we love God, unlesse we also love the brethren. See *Chap. 2. 9. 10. 11. and Chap. 4. 20.* He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth. And if a man say I love God, and hateth his brother he is a liar, for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? From which it appeareth that it is for want either of light or love, or rather both, if we have not fellowship one with another. So that we cannot demonstrate that we are in the light, nor that we love God, nor that we love our brethren, nor that God loveth us, nor that we keep his commandments unlesse we so love our brethren as to have fellowship with them. For this is his commandment that we love one another, and thus even so, as *Christ* hath loved us, for this is the manner and measure required; as I shall further make to appear, from the Law and Testimony.

1. From the command of God, *Lev. 19. 18.* thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.

2. It is also the command of our Lord *Iesus Christ*, *Mat. 22. 39. & Luke 10. 27, 28.* where the command is expressed, *This doe and thou shalt live, & John 13. 34. 35.* This I command you, that ye love one another.

3. And the measure of this love which is here commanded, is not a sparing or scant measure. But this is my commandment that ye love one another, as I have loved you, See ver. 12. And see also *John 13. 34.* A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another; From which it evidently appeareth, that though this commandment is but the same in substance which was from the beginning. Yet in this respect it is new and held forth to us under that notion, in regard it is backed with such an example, to wit, the example of *Christ*, who in his own person hath exemplified it to us and commandeth us to follow his steps, and to love one another, as he hath loved us, binding us thereby to his example in what we are able, and to make it all our mark to aime at as the mark of the price, of the high calling of God in *Christ Iesus*: So that in respect of the measure of our love, we ought not to be content with any lesser attain-

attainment there to love one another as Christ hath loved us.

4. It is also the message that we have heard from the beginning that we should love one another, See 1 John 3 11. And this is his commandment that we should believe on the name of his son Jesus Christ, and love one another as he gave us commandment.

5. It is like unto that first and great commandment, so viz. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy minde. See Mat. 23. 37, 38, 39, 40. & Deut. 6. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, &c. For upon these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

6. The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience and of faith unsained, (See 1 Tim. 1. 5) From which some having swarved, have turned aside unto vain janglings, See ver. 6. yea and that in these very dayes of ours.

7. We are exhorted seriously to see that we love one another with a pure heart fervently. See 1 Pet. 1. 22. It must not be in word and in tongue only, but in deed and in truth. 1 John 5. 18.

8. And the Apostle John seriously exhorteth us to it, shewing us a strong reason to induce us, so viz. Beloved (saith he) let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God, and he that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love, Chap. 4. 7, 8. It is therefore styled the royal Law, James 2. 8. Because it cometh both expressly and essentially from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings. Now in regard it is both the expresse command to love one another; and the essentiall and efficient worke of the Spirit of God for it both cometh of God, and God is love. And in regard that the end of the commandment is love, &c. And that the whole Law, so viz. that respects our neighbour is fulfilled in this, so viz. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self, and that this is that second great commandment, and so like the first; as that he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen. Nor manifest himselfe to be his Disciple, nor indeed a true Christian, See 1 John 4. 20. & Ch. 3. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, &c.

Then it necessarily followeth that such who are Christians indeed and expect to be so accepted and accounted of either with God or men, ought to account themselves most chiefly bound to

(12) this duty of love, and that to all the *brotherhood*, above all other duties commanded in the Law that concerns our neighbour. And that in regard that all other duties are inferiour, and *lesser matters of the Law*, As tithing of *Mint, Annisse, and Cummin* was to the *Jews*, which yet ought to be done, provided that *Judgement, mercy, and faith*, which are the greater matters be not thereby neglected nor secluded; for this was in the Scribes and Pharisees a token of their hypocrisie, and how can we possibly excuse our selves from the same charge, if by our strivings and contests about inferiour outward circumstantiall matters and things of God, as Sacramental matters and wayes of government and ministration?

We neglect and hinder the growth of love and so of faith likewise which are the two essentials and only infallible marks of our Christianity; And on the contrary part doe thereby provoke one another to wrath and enmity, biting and devouring one another till we be consumed, as is but just with God, because we cannot agree but fall out by the way, and that about the way like untoward children who part themselves into various pathes till they are be wildred and loose one another and some themselves and their poor soules. And considering also that all the ordinances of God, and the wayes of government, and all the ministrations and gifts of God, with all the ministrators whom he hath sent, and seen in his Church, yea all the inferiour commandements in the morall Law, with all the Prophets, Apostles, Scriptures both old and new, yea all the truths and doctrines or examples therein held forth, both concerning Judgements and mercies with all other wayes and means of grace. Are all but given and held forth to us through the necessary meanes, for this necessary end, *to wit*, The producing of love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfained. See 1 Tim: 1. 5. From all which I make bold to conclude, that if we make not the observance and use thereof, as helps and means conducing to the acquirement and fulfilling of this end, but in our keeping of the lesser we obstruct the greater, yea and even the mine of all, And that which if attained would bring the lesser with it; as a naturall fruite which is included in it, and cannot possibly be seperated from it; See 1 Cor. 13.

Then without all question or peradventure we quite pervert the end of all the commandements and meanes of grace that God hath appointed at least so far forth as we use them so as hath been said.

said before; *Making his commandments void, and of none effect* in our selves or others, *through our owne traditions*; for we thereby hinder both our selves and others from acquiring to the end of the holy commandments that are given unto us. By the keeping whereof we might be made partakers of the godly nature, love cometh of God, for God is love.

Now these things being generally assented too, as so I nothing doubt, but all that are Christians indeed, in the sight of God, both doe and will assent with me thus farre at least: and that they will agree to indeavour the acquirement of this blessed end, as in duty they are bound.

I shall further propose those means and wayes which as I conceive would strongly conduce to the acquirement of this end, through the help of God, the which as I conceive are of absolute necessary, and such as without which there is little hopes of this Accordant, nor of keeping this commandment, *in the keeping whereof, there is great reward.*

1. Then I desire as accounting it our duty, and the naturall product of true brotherly love, that we might pray one with, and for another, and each for all, *that we might be healed*, and our breaches repaired, and we united, and made of one hearts, of one mind, and of one judgement, and that the same mind might be in us that was in Christ *Iesus*: This I doubt not but all that are godly will justifie, and own, and indeavour to practise but that we might doe it in faith, it is required that we go first and be reconciled to our brethren, and then come and offer our gifts, See Mat. 5. 23, 24.

2. Therefore it is desired for this end, that we might have fellowship one with another, and each with any, both in publick and private, and that in all Gods ordinances, so as love requireth: so farre as possible, and convenient, as being all members of the same body; *to wit*, of Christ, and each of other; for how else is it ever possible that we should be reconciled, if we meet not together, nay if we receive not one another, *even as Iesus Christ hath received us to the glory of God the Father*; See Rom. 15: 7. & 3. John 9. 10. Mat. 9. 3.

3. That instead of disowning or excluding any that is known to be Godly, of whatever way, or Church they are of, either Ministers or people, from the Lords Supper, or any other ordinance, they desire to partake of. We might all be willing to invite each other:

either to any ordinance that Christ hath appointed for mutuall comfort and edification, where our selves are admitted & owned as Godly, in case when any Brother shall have occasion to sojourn or be occasionally amongst us to hear the word preached on any other businesse.

4. And not only so as but barely to partake of the outward ordinances; But that each and all that in the judgement of charity may be accounted brethren, might be owned as such, and dealt with as such, *not in word only but in deed and in truth*, in a practicall manner in all these respects or in any other, as we doe with brethren that are of the same judgement and society with us, as accounting it our duty both to watch over, and to exhort, reprove, admonish, comfort, restore and releeve; and all such duties as need requireth in a brotherly way for his good and comfort, as we our selves would also be dealt with in the like case, for our soules health and benefit any wayes.

Reas. For this we are commended, *Doe to all men as ye would they should doe unto you, for this is the Law and the Prophets*; But if to all men, much more to our brethren that in the judgement of charity are of the same body together with us, under Christ our Head.

Reas. For if they be members though they are but *feete*, (the body walketh slowly if it wanteth feete, See 1 Cor. 12. 21, 22. nay, if those *necessary members of the body*) should either be cut off, or it halteth on them, you know the charge, and how we are exhorted to *make straight paths for our feete, lest that which halseth be turned out of the way, which should rather be healed*: I wish this text were better understood then I doubt it is by the most part, even of the Churches of Christ, See Heb: 12. 12, 13, 14. 15. Such who halt betwixt two opinions, should rather be healed, and have straight paths made for their feete, then turned out of the way to the Kingdome of Christ.

5. That the doores of fellowship and Christian communion might be set as wide open as can lawfully be allowed, or as can be practised without breach of duty, and conscience towards God, by building men up in their evill wayes and *sowing pillows under all arme-holes, healing their wounds slightly, and preaching peace, when there is manifestly no peace, and that for their owne destruction.*

Reas. For if the doores of Discipline and Christian communion should shut out any of the elect of God, either from hearing of the word or Church communion for their soules health; or that they should be offended through the Churches default, and scattered abroad, yea whither they be weak or strong, See (Ezek. 34.) they ought not to be thrust with the side or shoulder, nor pushed with horns. But the diseased should be strengthened, and the sick healed, and that which is broken, bound up; and that which is driven away, brought home againe; and that which is lost, should even be sought out, and recovered, and no force nor violence should be used by any in ruling of them, lest the great shepheard of the sheep, who is not willing that the least of his little ones should perish, should require his sheep at the hands of the shepheards, and so destroy both the fee and the strong, and also feed them with judgement. See ver. 16 & read also, Mat. 18. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. And how wisely ought those to walke, towards them that are without, who are the lights of the world, and the salt of the earth; Mat. 5. 13, 14, 15, 16. For if that salt which should season the world, yea, even them that are without, and so bring them in, shall make it selfe nauncious and so unsavory in their conceit as that they will not come neer it, but abhorre and loath it, wherewith then shall the world be seasoned, even those yet without; sure they may perish, for such who are made unsavory in their conceits, if the great shepheard doe not search his flock, and seek them out; as Ezek. 34, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, &c. And to this end it was least the Apostle Paul should make himselfe nauncious and unsavory unto any at all; he became all things unto all men, that by all means he might save some, and made himselfe servant unto all, that he might winne the more; and hath also commanded us to be followers of him, even as he also was of Christ Jesus, charging us to give none offence neither unto Jew nor Gentile, neither to the Church of God, even as he pleased all men in all things, not seeking his owne profit, but the profit of others, that they might be saved, &c. And this he accounted to be walking wisely, toward them that are without, and the wisest way of all other for the winning of them, and he that winneth soules is wise indeed.

Oh how much might be gathered and spoken from these texts of Scripture, to spur us on to a tender hearted and pleasing sa-
vory, in offensive carriage, not only towards brethren, but even

towards them that are without and at enmity with us; and how needfull it is even in these our dayes, for ingaging brethren unto such carriage one towards another, how true is that prophesie, that *the love of many shall wax cold, because iniquity shall be increased*, yet it is not said, that the love of all shall wax cold, for some doubtlesse shall continue to the end and so be saved. But oh how far are we off in these dayes from those commands of Christ *Luke 6. 35. to wit, But love ye your enemies, and doe good, and lend, looking for nothing againe, and your reward shall be great in heaven, and ye shall be the children of the highest, for he is kind unto the unkind, and to the evill*; But oh how little kindnesse is in these dayes shewed even unto the good. But suppose there be some love and kindnesse shewed to our friends and brethren, of the same society whereof we are: What thanks may we possibly expect for this, when the very publicans do as much as we? See ver. 32, 33, 34. And how farre are we off from obeying those Important commands of Christ, verse 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. *To love our enemies and bless them that curse us, and pray for them that despitefully use us, and persecute us, &c.* when we cannot love our brethren nor pray for them, so cordially as we ought, and only because they are led and engaged through difference of Judgement to vary from us in respect of Church-government and Discipline, and in some outward wayes and administrations, which differences amongst us; can never be proved to be scandalous sins, for which they should be secluded and suppose them erroneous, yet they can never be proved to be therefore hereticks, because their different Judgements are onely about inferiour matters and circumstantialls, by any party, and therefore ought not to be rejected upon such accounts, nor separated from, but invited to communion in any ordinance state only, in case when known to be under some scandalous sin. All such I say, as are known to be Godly and worshippers of God, and so in the Judgement of charity, of the *misticall body of which Christ is the head*. And this I desire might be taken notice of, that as no man can deny but that the greatest latitude of love, is the most Christian. So is the greatest latitude of charity also, for love and charity are the very same inseparable quality, according to the latitude and measure of our love, such is the latitude and measure of our charity, either in judging of others, or in our carriage towards them in any respect.

6. & lastly, And that which must necessarily be agreed on before this admittance, & brotherly fellowship can be made tollerable to all the severall parties; is, that this admittance and receiving one another as love requireth, might not be accounted as a sin or scandall in them that do it, by any Church or Christian society, whereof they are members, nor taken as an offence by any of said members, but the contrary declared from these precedent grounds and inducements. In case as hath been said, that in the judgement of charity they be visible members of Christ his mystical body, yea whether they be, or be not for the present joyned with any particular body, one more then others; because some there are who through desire of correspondency with all, or any, so far as lawfull, and so far seeking the love of all, as not being willing to offend any, of whatever Judgement, or Church, or way they are found to be of, whose Judgements on wayes are matters of difference amongst the godly; there being God men of various Judgements in such respects, whose wayes and practices are accordingly, and this being granted and declared accordingly, this end intended, is halfe obtained. And this I dare undertake, that all this is no more then these commands require, as necessary duties for exemplification of our true Christianity, and that ought to be performed by all the Saints unto all their brethren, as much as in them lyeth, as the providence of God shall give them abilities and opportunities.

But lest any should thinke me to intend the exalting of some one way, and to desparage others, as being partially engaged, and so through prejudicial conceits and apprehensions of me, and of my ends herein, should be offended with me; As I have therefore plainly declared what my ends are before I began, and then my grounds from Scripture, from which I nothing doubt, but by the operation of the Spirit of God it will evidently appear, that these ends are nothing, but what is bounden duty, which we are mainly commanded and ought to practise; nor doe I much doubt but to make it good against all objections that can be offered on the other part, and to remove the scruples that may arise in the consciences of any that is a truly rationall conscientious brother of what ever way, or form of judgement that he may be of, if he be indeed a brother and member of Christ.

And further, I declare that though it were to be wished that

(107)

all that are of one heart, and of one judgement, in all fundamen-
tals; over, also one in all other respects. yet it is my opinion,
that these divisions are of the hand of God, who many times work-
eth by contrary means; and yet by his wise ordering of the e-
vents of things, the effect and product is the better and sweeter,
and the re-uniting so much the stronger, as I shall instance in some
particulars: First, you know it is the saying of Christ, that a
Nation, or Kingdom divided against itself cannot stand; and
therefore as it is also the policy of men to divide as much as pos-
sible where they desire to reign; Even so I say, who knoweth but
the Lord hath purposely divided us, lest we should have establish-
ed some Arbitrary government according to the will of man, pur-
posely to stop our settlement, and to weary us out, with our striv-
ings and contests amongst our selves; both to weaken our power,
with our enmities of our own wisdom; and to discover our folly and
infirmities, that so he himself may have dominion over us, and
be our only Head and Lord, and that in every respect, as King,
Priest, and Prophet; and so have all the glory ascribed unto him,
and that by all his people; according to that prophesie, Isa. 55. 3.
and 56. 7. *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The people of many
languages shall be brought to me, and shall say, The Lord is one, and
the Lord only shall be exalted in that day. And as I Paul saith to Philmon, concerning
his servant Onesimus, so we may well hope concerning our selves;
That perhaps we are parted asunder for a season that we might re-
ceive one another for ever, and be the more strongly united, See v.
13. And it may be also that it is very much to prove the natural-
ness of our love; See Philip. 2. 20. & 2 Cor. 8. 8. & 14. verses.
And that those that are upon such might be made known; for
this is one express word, wherefore there must be divisions amongst us;
See 1 Cor. 12. 18, 19. And the truth is, it hath much pro-
ved already the undutableness of our love; but very little of na-
turalness; For what great purpose of our naturalness in love can
it be, to compass our love to our brethren and friends of the same
judgement and society with us; this is no thanks worthy as hath
been said, from Luke 6. 32. But if we can love the brotherhood that
differ from us; and it may be speak evil of us, and are so far our
enemies as they would persecute and destroy us; this is thanks
worthy and will indeed prove, and demonstrate the naturalness
of our love, yea even to the very consciences of our enemies; and
be*

be the greatest means to turn their hearts; and win their affections, and convince them of their sin in being our enemies & speaking evil of us; and so to re-unite us by an inseparable bond of love and unity; that can never be broken; or such who ever upon whom it taketh not this effect; it will be a proof of sin upon their hearts; and so the Lord will reward and recompence us, if we for our parts shall performe our duties; (See also 1 Pet. 2. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23; 24, 25) by owning them as we ought.

And againe; By means of these divisions and contentions there is much more light and knowledge brought forth, then could possibly have had occasion to be knowne, or so much as discussed amongst us; but we should have gone blindly to worke, in all or most of these things contested about, in comparison of what is now made manifest; both in respect of the temper of mens spirits which is discovered by their writings; and the danger we were likely to have fallen into, through hardy and ridged arbitrary writings, in imposing upon them conscience things not convenient.

And besides, These divisions have manifestly been a means to provoke all parties: *any emulation in one respect to other.* See Rom. 11. 14, 15. *Read these two verses and you will know what I mean.* For by these divisions and writings many are provoked to a holy emulation yet to emulate one another in holiness and righteousness.

And thus as the Apostle saith, *The foolishness of God is wiser then men; and the weakness of God is stronger then men.* Yea even thus; he catcheth the wise in their own craftiness; and maketh us fools; and lets us find it by experience; that we might be wise; he well knoweth that the spirit which dwelleth in us, is able to envy; and hath told us of it, and yet that if we have envying and strife in our hearts, we should not rejoice, because it is wisdom as it cometh not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish.

Therefore I am glad to deal with us as children, (I will say so speak after the manner of men) yet as with pettish, foolish, backward, wilful, & stubborn children, to divide us, that he might unite us, to let us quarrel, and strive, and fight in a Christianall sense; purposely to unite us the more strongly; and to prove the naturalness of our love, and brotherhood; and our wisdom, and temper; and strength in love, that we might knowe our selves, even our own weakness, and folly; and that we are as yet but children, and unfit

for Reuerendesth, or to *Rights in Kings* as the Apostle speaketh.

Reas. For it is hereby manifest to us, by the practises of all, of every division of us, that we would be partial to our own cause, and party, and principles, and that against all others, and not for them though acknowledged brethren, and Christians in respect of fundamentals. And so would necessitate and inforce them to a compliance and conformity to our own particular principles, and practises, or else they must not expect any love, or favours, or kindnesse; or help, or encouragement from us. And this I could manifest at large to be the present temper of the spirits of many; and that of every party, and how the severall parties have some of them at least been guilty of blood through their zeale and malignity against the others; but it is so obviou, and so well known that I need not to demonstrate the particulars thereof. But this I dare say, and iudice, that this sort of *zeale* is not according to knowledge, nor according to love, and Christianity, and so by consequence not according to *Christ Jesus*, who was so farr off from shedding the blood of his brethren (though they were enemies in their minds, through wicked works) that he laid downe his life; and shed his own blood for them. And even so ought we to be also ready *even to lay downe our lives for the brethren*. And till this temper of Spirit be in some good measure found to be in us, we are not fit to rule or have the least authority committed to us, for we are so much under age, & but in the minority of Christianity, we cannot be spoken to, nor accounted (*know mee, nor men at age, nor as yet at years of discretion*) but *as our babies in Christ*, who must therefore be kept *at nurseries and governours*, till the time appointed of the Father.

And though it is a promise which we do and ought to expect, and to comfort one another with, that the Kingdome of Christ shall come with power, and that it is also justly to be expected to be neer at hand, and is in some measure already present; and some will needs be so forward as to take it by violence, and beat down all before them that stands in their way, yet will not much care to destroy their brethren in whom the King of Heaven is already in some measure, and so cut off them from being ad see it, and enjoy it in the power, who desire it also as much as themselves, but cannot accord to fetch it in by force of humane authority, have on-ly

ly defensive, whiles it is increasing and growing within us by the force and power of the Spirit of God; nor is it lawfull to say that this temper of spirit cometh of God; *is it not the persuasion of him that calleth us, to goe about to enforce conformity to our own principles, and to impose them by force upon our deare brethren that are contrary minded; but this is certainly of that spirit of Antichrist, which is long since come into the world; and yet this very temper of Spirit if power should be put into our hands, would be found in measure, lesse or more in any party of us.*

Let us therefore judge in our selves, whether we are any of us yet come to yeares of discretion suitable for government, whiles we are so partiall in our own cause and principles; *Shall he that hateth right, govern; saith the Scripture.* Nay, if the power and Kingdome be already in the hand of Christ, and he giveth it to whomsoever he pleaseth, can we expect to have it whiles in such a temper of spirit. Nay, may we not rather expect that *wise servants shall have the rule and government over such lowly ones, that can never agree but are ready to bite and devour one another at every advantage.* Oh brethren consider, and let us lay it to heart, and charge it home upon our consciences betimes! for there it will fall heavy one day, and if we judge not our selves we shall certainly be judged and chastened of the Lord, *that so we might not be condemned with the world.* But if our master cometh and findeth us smiting of our fellow-servants: you know the place where we must have our portion. And if we possibly do not nor care not, or cannot smite them hand or with the sword, yet there is a smiting which is as bad, *to wit, With the tongue,* for it is compared to a sword, or a sharp razor; And this kinde of smiting is too too frequent and common amongst us, and sheweth clearly that if power and commission were in our hands, the other sword would follow. Oh these things brethren we had need to repent and to humble our selves, and watch over our hearts, lest he cometh and find us in such a posture of spirit! the danger is great, yea it is so much the greater as it is expected to be neerer at hand. And therefore let us be exhorted by the Apostle, *Speak not evil one of another brethren, &c.* Nor think us to escape if we neglect so great salvation. *If we know these things, and that they are no other but the truths*

truths of God: Oh take heed that we let them not slip 1 but keep them applyed to our soules and consciences till they reply to doe them: *Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he cometh shall find so doing;* verily such a servant shall be Ruler over all his goods: Read but *Mat. 24* from 41. to the end; and consider it seriously for it much concernes us in these latter dayes: And And take notice of one thing, if we be indeed the people of God, we shall never ride on prosperously, but in the wayes of truth of *workes* and of *righteousness*: See *Psalm 45* for we must not prosper, but in the same way and manner that Christ hath led us, for this *Psalm* is a prophesie concerning Christ and his Kingdom, who will not own us but in the same path that he hath trod before us; Read it and compare it with our wayes and we need no more conviction.

Oh how many is there in this generation *that are pure in their own eyes, that yet are not cleansed from their filthiness*? (*Prov. 30:12*. 14.) that is so farre contrary unto brotherly love, and meeknesse, and of truth, and righteousness. Oh how sad will it be with us if the Lord cometh and finde us so doing: and in our envy and strife, and not in that wisdom that cometh from above, which is pure indeed and word, yet peaceable and gentle full of mercy and of good fruits, without grudging, & without hypocrisy, seeing the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace, of them that make peace: *James 3.17. 18.* see also *Ch. 4.11. 12.* & *ver. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.* And blessed are the peace-makers: *Mat. 5.* See there and consider to what sorts of people those 9 sorts of blessings do properly belong, and whether there be any of them proper for such kind of postures of spirit, as many of us are found in this our generation of Christianity.

The Apostle *James* telleth us plainly (*Ch. 1. 26.*) *That if any man amongst us seeme to be religious, and restraineth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this mans religion is vain.* And the same Apostle also, *Chap. 4. 11.* *Speak not evil one of another brethren, he that speaketh evil of his brother and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the Law, and judgeth by the Law, &c.*

And the reason is manifest because the Law forbiddeth us and commandeth love which is quite contradicted and judged by us when we speake evill one of another: And therefore let us lay it seriously to heart, and but consider it, how apt we have been in these

these deviding times to speake evill, yea, and even the worst that we can have any pretence for, one of another; how apt have we been to pick out the worst, *saking all in the worst part in the evil part*, and whispering it out to the desparagement one of another, by reaches, and jeeres, and reproaches, even running defcant upon the faults or failings, and weaknesse one of another most inharmoniously and maliciously, making it the most part of our discourse, and esteeming them best company who could cast forth the purest jeeres and reaches against our brethren of any contrary way: And who hath not been guilty in these respects? And how sad is it that we have so little regarded the danger of these things? I mean of despising *one of the least of those little ones that beleve in Christ*; See Mat. 18. 10. 11. *Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven their Angels doe always behold the face of my father which is in heaven. For the son of man is come to save that which was lost.* By which it is evident that every one of those little ones that beleve in Christ hath an Angell of God, (as it were) standing before God in a continuall readinesse to execute his commands in their behalfe, so that it were better for a man that a willow were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the Sea, &c. And therefore *was sent into the world because of offences.* See See ver. 6. 7. 8. 9. And it is certaine that Christ hath an eye upon them, who came on purpose to save that which was lost, and therefore will certainly save them, and hath his Angels ready, *and will smite them speedily, if they are unto him.* See Luke. 18. 7. 8.

Beloyed brethren, I include my selfe as well as others under this guilt, and have been *rebuked and chastened of the Lord for such things*, and therefore dare not *justify my self and condemn others*, nor expect any other, but that whoever continue in such practices shall smart for it one time or other, be they who they can, if they doe not repent. Will a father suffer his children to wrong, and bite, and devoure one another, nay his little ones especially, and not whip them for it: And *as a father purgeth his children, so the Lord purgeth them that feare him.* Psal. 103. 13.

Obiect. But it will be objected, that this is so maine a cause of the differences amongst us that it will hardly ever be altered to by any party in regard that all their principles are quite contrary to the receiving of any to communicate with them in the

Sacrament of the Lords Supper, unless they be known to be of their owne way: and especially strangers, who ordinarily get letters of recommendation for this very purpose, or else they are not admitted. And if every Minister or member of a Church, might bring in a stranger, merely upon his own knowledge and acquaintance with him, and that without satisfying of the rest of the Church, it would soon grow to that, that there could be no restraint nor discipline at all exercised in the Church, but all would be admitted that had any friend a member of a Church in the old promiscuous manner.

Ans. 1. To this I answer, Let it be considered, That the cause of the differences are not because that any at all that are knowne to be Godly, are admitted to the Sacrament, nor the doores of fellowship straitned on purpose, to keepe any of them out from any ordinance but to keep but those who are scandalous or ignorant, and that chiefly for their own good.

2. I answer, That I doe not propose it, that any should be admitted, either because they are Presbyterians, and so known to be, nor because they are Independants, or Anabaptists, but because they are known to be Godly: for there may be such of any party *crept in* who are not Godly, but *turne the grace of God into wantonnesse, and lasciviousnesse, and denying the onely Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ,* See Jude 4. I doe not move to the receiving of any, but that are known to be Godly, of what ever forme or Church or way.

3. I doe not move that every one might have liberty to invite another, but those that are known and approved to be Godly, and judicious; For the younger sort of professors cannot be thought able to discern, being but beginners; But such are not fit to be accounted Ministers, nor beare the office of Elders, or Deacons, that may not be trusted in such a case.

Obj. B. But it will be objected that the wisest may be deceived, whereas a whole Church might be more discerning, and some or other may know them unfit.

Ans. I answer, If it so falleth out it is the fault and will be the disparagement of him that bringeth him in upon his owne Judgement, and it is nothing at all to the rest of the Church. And if he have no ground so to judge of him, and yet admitteth him let him bear the blame, as may be thought fit, the Church is guiltlesse.

Ans.

Obj. But it will be objected that it is a main principle in Church-policy, to admit none that are not pollicially incorporated into some Church or other, and that are willing to submit and ingage to the discipline thereof.

Ans. 1. I answer, It is true, that it is an old and maine principle in Church policy, but I for my part could never learn from what Scripture ground it could be proved lawfull.

Ans. 2. But am, and allwayes have been against it in my Judgement, since I first knew it to be their principle and practise, but shall be glad if any will inform me how it can be lawfull considering the precedents grounds of this discourse, and most especially that command of the Apostle. *Receive ye one another even as Jesus Christ hath received you, to the glory of God the Father, see Rom. 15. 7.*

Now if we doe not receive one another to the outward ordinances and Christian communion, which are all the glory that we can receive and admit them too, how doe we follow Christ who hath received us to the glory of God the Father? which is the highest and greatest glory that he himselfe can have. And this his love to us hath ingaged him to, when as yet we were sinners.

And it alwayes looked so like to the practise of *Discipline*, who loved to have the prebaptized, and received for the Apostle John, and the brethren, &c. Inasmuch that these principles in my opinion ingaged in a great measure to the very same practise, for if the Apostle John, yes or Christ himselfe should come amongst us as so he doth sometimes in his members, he could not be received till he first conforme himselfe both in judgement and practise, or professe so at least, and also ingage to submit to the discipline, and so be under those who are all under him, else he must not communicate.

But this I dare affirme, and have alwayes so accounted it as a dangerous thing, for any Church, or any part or member of a Church, neither in word or in deed, nor justly than they would, (See John 9. 10, 11.) especially considering there is no ground that I yet know of in all the Scripture for such a policy, but is merely invented to ingage or enforce men to their own principles, and practises, whether their judgements be sanctified of the law, false or thereof, yes or no, the which is doe Christian it is not doe

ing by our brethren, as we would that they should do unto us in the like case.

Object. But it will be said, if they be not incorporated with us, and ingage to the government of the Church, we have no power to exercise any authoritative discipline over them, nor doe we account our selves ingaged to it.

Ans. I answer, The Church hath as much power from Christ, and is as much ingaged in duty to exercise it over any that is called a brother, and owned as a brother, as if they were ingaged and incorporated with them in the same Church; and this ought to be declared amongst all the Churches, see Levitic. 19. 17. Math. 18. 15, 16, 17. and 1 Cor. 15. 48. 12. and 1 Thess. 5. 14.

Now it cannot be denied, but we ought to love and not hate our brother in our hearts, but we cannot shew that we love him, if we doe not rebuke him, *hee suffer for us*, him. And therefore it is said, *if thou shalt not rebuke him, which hee prayeth that no excuse may be found against thee*, hee is not of our Church, or way, or, or it belongeth to the Church he is of to deal with him, this will not serve to shew our love to him, but rather what we hate him, see Lev. 19. 17. So that all the injunctions that lye upon us, that ingage us to any duty toward brethren of the same Church, lyes clearly upon us, from this duty of love to be charicified unto all, or any, whomsoever, that we account a brother so farre forth as we have ability, and opportunity, yea though in some respects because of difference in judgement and ways they be really our enemies.

Object. But it will yet be objected that we have nothing to do with the members of other Churches in respect of discipline and government, but it belongeth wholly unto them to admonish, rebuke, suspend, and excommunicate as need shall require, and if they doe not, it is their fault and blame.

Ans. In which answer, Mistrake is if they doe it not when they see cause for it. But if they doe it not, they ought to be admonished of their duty, and to be reformed thereof, and if they neglect any Church where he hath communicated, and so been owned as a brother, may doe it, as we have the duty as after communion it be will not be a sufficient hindrance to our communion with them, and if it were their own member, and then to be rebuked.

of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by his power and authority if there be ground in Scripture for what they do. But this does not
 11. *Objection.* But it will yet be objected that suppose they be not as yet of any Church, yet will not engage to any party, how then can they be discipline if need should require.
 12. *Answer.* If it may be conceived in the judgement of charity that any such is a brother, he may be likened to be owned as a brother, by any Church where he is known as such, and be admitted to all the ordinances. And where he is admitted in any or many Churches he is also subject to the discipline thereof, and cannot avoid it if he would, for he cannot avoid the judgement of Christ, where ever he dwelleth, or cometh, and if he stay amongst them they may and ought to discipline him according as they do with brethren, and it will be as authoritative by the power of Christ as if he were a joynt member. For Christ will either good, and approve, and bless any just administration in his sacred name (See Mat. 18. 18, 19, 20.)

And in my apprehension there is that are Godly, that are not yet joynt with any Church by lay or clergy love, and private conversation, and that cannot yet resolve to be joynt to any but the body mystical. And thus because their judgements are contrary to some or other of such of their principles; And this principle is, that it is one of the greatest obstructions to their coming in of any that I know of being not joynted or joynted but on yett by want of policy, and being the most obstrusive to love and communion which God hath so graciously comprehended and charged on us above all other duties as hath been proved. And it is well known that many would join themselves to one Church or other, but for differing thereon, and that as he look for, and pray, and guard himself, and pray for God for a reconciliation, that he may might join, and yett in of some, and yett to join to some, but to the Church of God, is not to those of their own mind, in this respect as within there is many. And therefore this principle being once generally agreed to be, and thus would have done to all satisfaction, and that in all the time through the blessing of God in all other differences about these inferior matters it has not failed as it should have.

Reas. For by means of fellowship one with another, The Spirit of God re-opening amongst us, would bring us all to the

fringe judgement, whereas whilst our judgements are different, is much cooler and interposed, and oblige such our love and cordial respects ought rather to hold many lines of production (will speaking) and approaches, and dissolving of sinners, through our naturall infirmities, which is not a means to provoke unto love and good works, which we ought to use and continually practise, but the quite contrary, even to wrath and hatred, and enmity, and disaffection, is evidently appearing, and manifestly perforce, besides what we know from Scripture, that man is made

Obje^d We shall not deny (some will say) to give such for bre-
thren whom we know to be Godly, but we cannot own all to be
pret^r men who are admitted to the Sacrament of the Lords Supper
esp^{ci}ally where it is promiscuously administered, yet how then
can we communicate with them in the word and table as to
then a justification of their male administration, which is quite
contrary to our Judgements and Faith, *and our Answer is all of faith
is fin.*

109. *Ans.* If it could not properly be said that either the Presbyterians, Independents, or Methodists, do at times promise so, but there is some reason that is by no means admitted to the ignorant and scandalous, or malicious imputation of perfidy or other of the Christian religion, less or more, either in truth or hypocrisy. And suppose they minister Godly, that is, of larger principles for edification than any, and as safe we think just too large, we ought in the judgement of charity to suppose that his judgement made him an infidel upon that account we may lawfully communicate with him as we judge him to be godly and ought to owe him, and if occasion serve, communicate with him and the charge will lay to his conscience, if he be in fault; and not at all on us who do not refuse communicating with him, and owing him ours. All the end of which may be we know but few, or it may be none at all, but are only taught by the Godly Minister to partake with him; and it is he that administred it, and so communicateth it to us, and if we should deny being invited till we know all the rest, it may be so, but it may not, some think a Christian whilst we live, that has dropped his communion; then, when invited, deny him to be a Christian and Minister of Christ.

And I suppose a Minister at his first coming to a Congregation, where

where the people are numerous that have formerly been received to communion by a presiding Godly Minister, shall such a Minister be in conscience bound not to administer the Sacrament, till he be so far acquainted with them as to know them to be free from scandal, and so have a competency of knowledge to examine themselves, and to know the danger in case they receive unworthily?

Let any Christian judge whether this were not too heavy a task for a Godly Minister, and in such a case whether it might not serve to diminish them all in publique, to take care how they tempt God in meddling with his ordinances in such respects before they know how to examine themselves, that so they may come preparedly, and discern the Lords Body, and so not eat and drinke to themselves judgement. And whether such a Minister is not charged for his part, in case he so admonish them, or whether he must call them all into rayall and examination, before he may lawfully administer the Sacrament, let wise men judge, whether the judgement of charity will ingage them so to heavy, a task before they must admit them.

And whether after telling them the danger, and inviting them to come to him in case that any make doubt whether he be fit and able to examine himself; that so he may receive it in faith and have benefit thereby; and he will be ready and willing to instruct and teach them what in him lyeth, and advise them for their good.

But as for him what more can be done in such a case, doth not charity bind him to communicate with them, knowing nothing to the contrary but that they are futable and fitly prepared, being owned as such, by his predecessor, think but of this Scripture, 1 Cor. 16. 14. *Let all your things be done with charity*, and it will convince, for what can this imply, but then that there must be an ingredient of charity visible in us, in all our sayings, and administrations, that we undertake in the name of God for edification, now charity *suffereth long, and is kind, is a gentle, is thoughtful, is not envious, is without guile, loveth all things, beareth all things, endureth all things*. Inasmuch that if a man had all other gifts of the Spirit, and wanted but this one ingredient of charity, in the exercise thereof, and that also in visibility as held forth with them, or as the efficient cause of the exercise and use of all the rest,

he is accounted as nothing by the Apostle *Paul*, meaning that all the other gifts are as it were uselesse, and unprofitable, for edifying of the Church, if this be wanting as chief ingredient for favouring, and relishing, and seasoning of them, it being as salt for seasoning, and relishing all unflavouring meats which else are insourous and unfit for food for our naturall bodies. See 1 Cor. 13. & Mat. 5. 13. & see Coloss. 4. 6. *Let your speech be alwayes with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how to answer every man.* See also Mark 9. 49, 50. & Lev. 11. 10. By salt can be nothing else meant but a cordiall affection of love or charity, and that held forth in visibility for favouring all our doings and ministrations in the name of God.

For if such who are the only salt of the earth doe not keep themselves favoury, but become insourous and unfavoury to those whom they ought to season, how shall they ever season them, having made themselves unfavoury, and wherewith shall themselves be seasoned, to make them relish better for the seasoning of others, and especially of the world, when they will not hear them? For how shall they enlighten the world or salt or season them? In case they will not come neer them, because they have made themselves unfavoury as to them at least in their apprehensions, though they be not so in themselves: for by that means they put themselves out of all possibility of doing them any good, and therefore the Apostle *Paul* became all things unto all men that by all means he might save some, this was his wisdom, and ought to be ours, and wherein we faile of this and walke by some other rule, we are doubtlesse to farre off from the wayes of God, and the wisdom of his holy Spirit, (See for this, Acts 21. 24. 26.) Now *Paul* acted as if the Jewish ceremonies had not been abolished, and how he circumcised *Timotheus* because of the Jews, Acts 16. 3. And how he blest as without law, yet was under the law, 1 Cor. 9. 20. that he might win them that were without law.

Consider these things seriously, and lay them in the ballance of the Sanctuary, and see if they will not more then counterpoise all that can be objected, why we should not communicate in the most distinguishing ordinance, with all whom we know to be Godly, and yet still continue to differ in our practices as our judgements lead us till our judgements are convinced, and reconciled, that so our practices also may be the same.

Nor can it be said that we justify such in their male administrations, by our communicating with them, our practice being publicly known, to be the contrary in our own societies.

And consider also whether this is not the likeliest and nearest way to a full Accordance, and reconciliation in all our differences that are amongst us. And whether keeping separate and a distance can in any possibility produce Accordance. And whether our duty of love can be performed without this fellowship one with another. See 1 John 1:7.

Objection. But it is a thought which I feare ariseth in the hearts of many. That their brethren of other Judgements and ways from them are so stiffly spirited, and so malignant towards us, that if we should invite them to communion, and shew them never so much love and respect, they would not heare us nor accept our motion, but despise our offer and invitement, and it may be take it as though we were convinced that our wayes are not good, and that we are ready to forsake them upon that account, and so join with them, and approve of their wayes as better then ours, the which we are unwilling they should thinke of us, till it be so indeed.

Answer. To this I answer. We must and ought to do our duty to them whom we account brethren; what ever they thinke, or how ever they take it, if our consciences be clear in the sight of God, we shall have peace with him, though when we speak of peace to our brethren, they are hear for war to ourselves.

But if our brethren take it in the evil part, and despise our motion and invitement, the fault is theirs in the sight of God, and if they be stiffly spirited and malignant against us, let us take care that we give them no cause but doe our best endeavour to remove all *stumbling blocks*, and offences that are on our parts, and the Lord will bless us and hear our prayers, and reward our work, and deliver us from all our enemies, and for ought we know he may turne their hearts to be otherwise minded, then we can be ready to be our selfes as hath been a cause of theirs, and theirs of ours. And so likewise may our yielding and holding forth of love and concordance provoke them to do as they like, but as to our selves we should be as we would be treated, and as we desire to be treated, so we should treat others, and as we desire to be reconciled, so we should reconcile others. But let us make it our first and

(30)

and that as a matter of greatest importance, and concerning to us, yea as a matter of life and death, let the Lord cometh and findeth us fighting our fellow servants. *—*

And give me leave a little to inculcate and beat it home to our very consciences. Consider it seriously, did not the Lord himself inculcate this command upon his holy Disciples, and that over and over again, with argument after argument, and command after command? and shall we think it needless in this frozen age? Nay, Did he make it his business, when he was ready to leave them, and to give it forth chiefly as his will and testament, and shall not we think it worthy to be made as our business, and that of greatest concernment in this our age, and generation, because *the love of many waxeth cold already?* However in this treatise I study brevity, expecting that men better able, will make it their business. And yet if I seem to repeat and fall on again with the same Sentences, I will to please them further. Consider therefore thus with the Lord, *I have loved you, I have loved you, that ye love one another as I have loved you, that ye also love one another,* John 13. 34.

Consider it I say, It is the commandment of Christ to all such as are, and would be accounted, and known by all men to be his Disciples, which is the promise annexed, *vult 59. By the fruit ye shall know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

Now the measure of this love is expressed in the latter part of the 34. ver. in this, *As I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*

And this measure of love is further explained, as to the latitude and extent thereof, in reference to the same command, by **John 15. 12, 13.** *That if any man love me, that he keep my commandments, that I may abide in him, and that I may love him, and that I may manifest my love unto him, that I may give my life for him.*

And that this is the true and proper meaning of Christ without any mythical dark lens. So how do we know? A disciple, that loving Disciple, who is therefore not Jesus, the beloved Disciple, the Disciple whom Jesus loved, is doing a stronger work and will witness to the fact. And so we can see that the work is not done all yet. It is not done with a new, present tradition, and so we then

then any of the rest, and chiefly because that his doctrine of love, and his commands thereof, took more impression in him then the other Disciples, and the love of God, and the love of the brethren took more place in his heart, as to it is manifest in his Epistles, and Gospel, by his treating more and more fully of love, then all the other Disciples.

1. *Con.* From whence I may gather by the way, That they that love most, are the most beloved, and the most bent to the pressing and inculcating, and communication of the doctrine of love, unto their brethren.

2. *Con.* And that they whomsoever that cannot cordially embrace, and receive this doctrine, are not cordially embraced and received of Christ, and that in respect of the measure of our cordiality.

3. *Con.* Look how much more cordially we embrace and receive this doctrine of love, by so much the more cordially we shall be, and are embraced, yea loved and received of the Lord Jesus Christ. And thus much by the way.

Now for the proper extent of the manner and measure of this duty of love, See 1. John. 3. 16. *For hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

It is not sufficient to love in words, and in tongue only, but it must be in deed, and in truth, (vers. 18.) especially if we would know that we are of the truth, and that the love of God dwelleth in us, and would have our hearts assured before him, (See ver. 17. 19.) we must not shut up our bowels of compassion if we have this worlds good, and see our brother hath need for in such case, there is no appearance of manifestation that the love of God abideth in us.

No, he that loveth not his brethren abideth in death. And whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and we know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. See ver. 14. 15. Read this Chapter throughout, and Ch. 4. wherein it is so evident that the Apostle presseth this duty of love as the great and chiefest duty and command of Christ, and that without which we cannot possibly be assured that we are yet saved from death, and life, and that God loveth us, and we him, no more than we know, or can know, or see the things that please him, nor than we know God, or love him,

him, and he is so, nor that we shall have boldness in the day of judgment; neither can our fears that he will be cast out, nor can we prove our selves to be true men, but liars; because it is impossible that he who loveth his brother whom he hath sinned against, should love God whom he hath sinned against. *1 John 2:10* And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God should love his brother also. See Chap. 4. And this is the message that ye have heard from the beginning, that we should love our brethren, Chap. 3. 11. See also 1 Tim. 1. 5. Now stand of these commandments is love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith undefiled.

And why is this called the end of other commandments? but because that he that hath loved another hath fulfilled the Law, for no man can love his brother but he loveth God; nor any man love God; but he will also love his brother, and upon this hangeth the whole Law, and the Prophets, to wit; To love God above all; and our neighbour as ourselves.

And againe, Because if this love be in us in perfection as it ought, the naturall product of it will be suitable both in respect of our duties to God, and to our neighbours, for love worketh no evil against our neighbours, much lesse against God, See 1 Cor. 13.

Now this main duty of love and the measures and necessity of it being sufficiently proved, and that from such authority as no Christian can for shame gainsay it, or oppose it in the least. I shall proceed to answer some Queries that may be made.

1st Query. The first and chief whereof is; And who is our brother that so we may know whom we ought to love with so vast and boundlesse an affection, as that for their sakes if need so require we should be willing even to lay down our lives for them, and much more our goods and estates; as so the command is clear, and full, and without exception.

Answer. I answer, I shall first shew whom we ought to account as brethren, and such to whom we owe this measure and manner of love. And secondly, I shall shew whom we ought to account our neighbours, and we ought to love them.

Now first, I shall shew to be loved and accounted our brethren, who are to be professors of faith in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and to be worshippers of God, and that they are so, is to be known by their profession, and not by their

maintain any manifest convicted error after due admonition, nor are not willfully schismatical, nor imperiously proud and arrogant, and this I believe no rational and sober Judicious Christian will deny.

1. Considering that of necessity we must but judge according to the rules of charity, in regard we have not any rules of certainty, but such as wherein we may be deceived, and it is far better to be deceived by extending our charity to the loving of such as do not properly deserve it, than through mere uncharitableness to deny such love and brotherly respect, as our duty requireth to all the brotherhood, and so to give them just cause to be offended with us; for it is dangerous to offend one of the least of those little ones that believe in him. See Mat. 18. 6.

2. Considering the length and breadth of that love, or charity which cometh of God.

Reef. For the love of God be-fore and ahead in our hearts really, as it ought, it is to charitable that it thinketh no evil. Nay, it beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, (See 1 Cor. 13: 1-7) Nay, it suffereth long, and is kind, See verse 4. It taketh not off things from the evil man, it judgeth nothing before the time, it is made to put the smacking stick, nor breaketh the bruised reed, and such like, many Scriptures I might produce, but these I hope are sufficient for any that understand them, and the latitude of their sense.

3. Considering the abuse of your office, of judging or disowning any as brethren, of whom we know so much as hath been said before of their profession and gratitude, but have nothing to the contrary whereof to accuse them. And they that are or should be *the salt of the earth*, should by all means take heed they loose not their *saltness*, or become unworthy on whom they should season, for who then shall season them, that so they might be able, or in a capacity to season others. See Mat. 5. 13. & Mark. 9. 50. *Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another*; with our blessed Saviour. And by this salt is meant the affection of love and charity, for without the exercise of these, though we had the *gifts of men and angels*, and such other gifts reckoned up by the Apostle, (1. Cor. 12. 8.) yet we should be so unseasonable together with those gifts we did not exercise *charity*, as that we should be *for nothing*, nor season any of those with whom we con-

verse, but seem as it were, naught unto them, all other gifts would do us no good for edifying of the Church, if Charity be wanting in us, or if we doe not exercise them in a way of charity, and as mixed with charity and powdered with the affection of love, the which (as saith to our corporall meat) maketh it savoury and seasoning to the hearts of others, but if we step aside out of the ways of charity, and cannot hold that forth, as having it really in us, and acting by it and in it. It is because we have but little of it in our own hearts, and then who can expect to be seasoned by us. See 1 Cor. 12. 31. and Chap. 13. 1, 2, 3. and compare the sense whether it be so or not hath been said. *Covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet love I unto you a more excellent way*: that is to say, get abundance of charity, so as to exercise those gifts in the way, and then a manifestation of charity, or else they are all worth nothing for edifying of the Church, but like *golden vessels*, or *silver vessels*, in which there is not much for the use of edifying. No No. *Knowledge indeed puffeth up, but it is love that edifieth*. See 1 Cor. 13. 1.

But it may yet be demanded how this Scripture is to be understood, how love edifieth, considering love is an internal grace, as so also is faith, which cannot be communicated to others from us, but are gifts of God.

Answer. It is love which edifieth, because love is the efficient cause of all Spirituall ministrations that are effectuell for edification. It is the fountain and spring from whence doth flow forth such cordiall expressions as are effectuell for edification. It is of the essence of the Spirit of God, *as the Father loveth the Son, and the Son loveth the Father, and God loveth him*.

So that when love ingathereth us, or is the efficient cause of any expression or ministrations, it may truly be attributed to the Spirit of God as the chief cause of such ministrations, and they are certainly effectuall either as the favour of life now liveth, or of death unto death, as the words of God, say, *as our Saviour saith, the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life*. See John 6. 63.

So words that come from the Spirit are Spirituall words, they are wordly fervent, sweet, and powerful words. They are words of life and power for edifying in the Church, and producing *unto love and good works*. And therefore when men are edified and

exercised

exercised from a root and principle of love; they are properly acted and exercised by the Spirit of God. And it is more proper to say so of them, then that they exercise their gifts; for it is their gifts, *to wit*, of the Spirit, and Faith, and Love, which exercise them. They are but the instruments; God is the Agent. It is God that granteth them according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith; that they being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all Saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge; that they might be filled with all the fullness of God, See Ephe. 3. 16, 17, 18, 19.

See here what large requests the Apostle putteth up; and that in few words for the Ephesians, and in how compleat an order. For though he ascribeth the original of all strength and might in the inner man, to the Spirit of God, as the prime efficient cause thereof, and the most immediate, as so it is, yet as next immediate, and as instrumentall causes whereby he worketh immediately, he joyneth faith and love as co-operative, (and if I may so say) as co-essentiall causes of all spirituall power and strength, for working us up, and making us capable and comprehensive to be filled with all the fullness of God; for, unless Christ dwelleth in our hearts by faith, and that we be rooted and grounded in love, we cannot be able to comprehend with all Saints, as ver. 18. Nor can we be filled with all the fullness of God, as ver. 19.

And consider also how no lesser measures of the Spirit, and Faith, and Love, will serve the turne to fulfill the desires and requests of the Apostle on their behalfe, but that they might be filled with all the fullness of God, which might teach us not to be content with any poor measures of his holy Spirit. But to ever earnestly even the best gifts, and the largest measures that are attainable, and that we are capable of. For he that hath hid us to vet them, and like them, can easily give them, and make us capable and comprehensive of them through faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

Now the spirit worketh faith, and worketh by faith, to make us capable of discerning all spirituall things, for they being invisible, God himselfe cannot be seene with bodily eyes, but onely through an eye of faith, And faith worketh by love, and also worketh.

keeth love, See 1 Thess. 5. 30 & Gal. 5. 16. For what we cannot see through faith and apprehend to be lovely, we cannot possibly love it (I meane it) of spirituall and invisibles. And therefore it followeth, that if we have but a little faith, a dim-eyed faith, we have also but a little love, and a little desire after spirituall things, but are poor, and content also to remain poor in all such respects, (See Rev. 3. 7, 8.) But God hath chosen the poore of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of his Kingdome. And David also, his eyes were upon the faithfull in the Land, and in power excellent shew they might dwell with him. Psal. 101. 6. But he was a man after Gods own heart, where shall a man be found now in this generation that maketh his choice after the same rule, to make them his associates, and companions, and delights, and his counsellors, as David did, See Psal. 16. 3. & James 2. 2, 3, 4, 5. And why is it? but for want of faith, which worketh by love, and worketh love to the choicest objects that are the most lovely, and also the most loving, for there is a reciprocity in this respect, in the sight of God, as hath been shewed.

But if it be conceived that many doe in a great measure as David did, I say let us take the Apostles counsell who beseeched in such a case, to move us with an example. (See 1 Thess. 4. 10, 11) which sheweth that he would not have us rest content with any poore or scant measures, but to be pressing forwards, towards perfection in such respects wherein we can never goe beyond the mark that is set us, and therefore it is that the Apostle biddeth, *being made free and are zealous of spirituall gifts, seek that we may be able to the edifying of the Church,* See 1 Cor. 14. 12. From which it is evident that we may and ought to seek, that we might excell, provided it be not to make our selves famous in the eyes of men, but that our consciences may bear us witness in the holy Ghost, that our end is mainly for the edifying of the Church.

Now this end can never sway us to any great idoll, unless our love to the Church engage us to it, and the love of Christ must as it were constrain us, as it did the Apostles, yea and even Christ himselfe, now where love engageth us it will not pervert the end of such ordinances which Christ hath left us for our edification, to make them as stumbling block, and as rocks of offence upon our strict communion, whereby we have occasion for edifying one another in faith and love.

But it will rather cast up and prepare the way, and remove the stumbling blocks out of the way of his people, See Isa. 57. 14. That to all the elect and beloved of God may accord with us, and come in and consecrate with us in all Christian communion and brotherly fellowship, for it is the nature of love to unite cordially, for love is in the heart, and therefore it was that in the primitive times, they that beleaved were of one heart, and of one mind, and the successe was, they had all things common.

Now it is well known that cordiall love cannot be enforced, but must be induced, we cannot cudgell it into the hearts of any; God is the Author and Fountaine thereof, nor can our seperation and keeping a part ever induce it, but it must be induced through loving and kind fellowship, and communion together, and therefore it is that God hath commanded fellowship.

Consider seriously this Text of Scripture, what it clearly importeth, I speak it as to wise men (as the Apostle did) to judge what I say of it, to wit, 1 Cor. 10. 14, 15, 16, 17. *Wherefore my dearly beloved, fly from idolatrie. I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say. The Cup of blessing which we blesse, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ. The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ. For we being many are one bread, & one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread.* From all which give me leave to aske you, doth not his bidding us fly from idolatry, imply that we may idolize the bread and wine, as so not only the Papists do, who account it the real body and blood of Christ, which they beare us doe, and must containe still all things unchanged. But when we make account as if the bread and wine after consecration or blessing of them had any vertue in them to nourish our soules to eternall life, which were only left us as outward signes to be eate and drunke in remembrance of him, and that by his body, the Church, so that when they gave thanks or blessed the bread and wine, they did not pray that the bread and wine might be blessed to the people for their Spirituall nourishment. But they prayed that the communion and fellowship of the mystical body might be blessed, that is to say, that their union and fellowship together might be a meanes of their edification, and that in faith and love, and so might grow up together, and hold close to the Head from which all the body being knit together, by joyes and bands having nourishment ministered, might increase with the

the increase of God, See Coloss. 2. 19. And this is the end for which this Sacrament was ordained; so wis. for our edification in faith and love, and that by having communion with Christ who hath promised his presence amongst us, in case we follow his steps and walke in love as he hath loved us, and so obey his commandement and love one another, owning one another, and having fellowship one with another, and disowning none that are members of his body, but receiving all his members, even as he hath received us to the glory of God the Father: Then I say he will doubtlesse own us and be present with us, and shed his love abroad in our hearts, and build us up in faith, yea the whole body together, till we come to be all, and strong, so as to aske what we will, (with a joint consent) and it shall be given us, whereas whilest divided, how can we expect that our prayers should be heard whiles we are not reconciled to our brethren which he hath bid us do first even as Joseph to his brethren, Gen. 43 5. *I shall not see my face except your brother be with you*, even so saith our Saviour, *Go first and be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift, and leave thy gift on the Altar till then, as if he should have said, doe not expect thy gift shall be accepted, till you be agreed, you are both my sons, I cannot indure you should live at variance, come not here, doe not expect to see my face till you be agreed, I will not own thee in such a posture of spirit, thy brother hath something against thee that is contrary to love, go and agree with thy brother, as I have commanded thee, and then thou art welcome; Like and ye shall receive yecke and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you, and by this all men shall know that ye are my Disciples, if (you make it appear) that ye love one another: Whereas on the other part, how can any man thinke you are my Disciples, or have any love to me, or I to you, if ye cannot love and own, and have fellowship together one with another as brethren ought, and as love ingaeth where it is cordiall, and not in word and tongue only, but indeed in truth. Nay, how easie is it for any man to prove and that from Scripture, that whoevert denyeth this Christian fellowship with his Christian brethren, yet in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth? See 1 John 1. 6, 7. & Mat. 23. 24 & Mat. 7. 17. Yea, Dab. could say to Sampson, *How dost thou say I love thee, whose heart is not with me?* See Judges 16. 15.*

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And this we may justly say to our selves, how shall we say for shame, or how can we think that we *love God*, if we have not a care to *keep his commandments*? And can we keep his commandments and not love our brethren? or can we say we love them and cannot agree with them but fall out by the way.

Obj. &c. But it will be objected, such and such are our brethren, but they will not goe our wayes, we are in wayes that we know to be right, and they are in by wayes, and are bewildred, and will not be perswaded, and how can we help it, we are forced to leave them.

Ans. If they be our brethren, and that we see them out through weaknesse, and that we thinke our selves *strong*, we ought rather to *bear the infirmities of the weak* then to *please our selves*, lest our father be angry with us, and say, why did ye leave my little children, and overrun them in the dark night, whilst they cannot see but be bewildred? and so send us back to fetch them home, and not suffer us to rest or come within doors, till we bring them with us, and it may be whip us also for leaving them at all without a guide. It will not serve to excuse us, to say our brethren were wilfull and pettish, and would go their own wayes, or go none at all, they being but children. No, a father will not loose his children, and danger to have them cast away, because they are weak and pettish, but will rather say, why did ye not rather turre back and bring them to me that I might have corrected them, & taught them better, but you must leave them in danger, and in an angry mood, could ye not have spoke them faire and in a loving way perswaded them as children.

Beloved brethren, Consider it seriously for there is no father can be so choice and tender hearted towards his little children, as the Lord is choice and tender hearted towards his little ones as hath been shewed before, and though he will not deny us to be his children but own us as such in an overly-way, yet he will not welcome us, nor lodge us in his bosome with such sweet embraces and kisses of love, nor entertaine us familiarly, so as to know his counsells, and his mind, and secrets, till at least we have indeavoured what in us lyeth to perswade our brethren to come along with us, and that in love and meeknesse as a nurse useth to doe with children. And when we have used the means & cannot do it, yet let us never cease to pray to our father, saying, father perswade them

(22)

thou art able to doe it though we cannot. *The Lord perswade Iapheth to dwell in the tents of Shem. And then Canaan shall be his servant.* And doubtlesse it is already upon the hearts of many of the faithfull servants and messengers of God, both to pray, and preach for this Accordance, though with little hopes of obtaining there desires because they see such stiffenesse in the hearts of the people, and averfenesse to it, and in some of their ministers which is sad and lamentable, that the leaders of the people should cause them to erre, and to remaine stiffe against the expresse commands both of God the Father, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of his holy Apostles, and Prophets, & not to stoop at all, nor submit themselves nor their wayes and judgments, but as ascribing to themselves infalibility of Spirit as if they could not erre, See 1 Cor. 13. 12.

Consider I beseech you whence this stiffenesse ariseth, and whether it be not manifest that it springeth from the root of pride and self love, and conceits of our own wisdom above others of our brethren, that yet in account with others are as wise as we, and it may be much wiser; and that also in the sight of God. But as I said before, *when the leaders of the people cause them to erre.* The case is lamentable and very dangerous, *lest they that are led of them be destroyed.* See Isa. 9. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. And let me say to such stiffe spirited leaders of the people: If they will but looke in the bottome of their hearts they shall certainly finde there a root of pride, and selfe-love, to be the originall fountain from whence this stiffenesse springeth and groweth up. And they cannot but know who it was that called such like men *blinde guides for straining out a gnat, and swallowing a cammel, and for omitting of judgment, mercy, and faith, and tishing of Mint, Annisse, and Cummin,* as hath been spoken to before.

Objct. But it will yet be objected, shall not we be going on, and pressing forwards, but we must stay for them that will not pace with us but make stands by the way, and are not satisfied that we goe the right way, and therefore will not forward in the best and neereest pathes which we know are such, and they will not be perswaded, and some are not so able, and zealous, as yet to goe forward so fast as we, and shall we stay for them?

Ans. If they be our brethren we may well stay a while to perswade them, and tell them what way our father directed us to goe, and we cannot be sure our selves that he hath so directed us,
but

but we can easily shew it them, and make it manifest. But if it be their weaknesse and want of zeale, let us take them by the hand as little children, and help them forward, and go their pace, and not leave them behind, as amongst the wolves; our Father will be angry if we over-run them, and whip us for it. For this is not like as a nurse cherisheth her children, as the Apostle dealt with the *Thessalonians*, 1 *Thes.* 2. 7, 8. It is not so gentle, nor so affectionate, for he being affectionately desirous of them was willing to impart, unto them not onely the Gospel, but even his owne soule, because they were deare unto him, and so would also *Silvanus*, and *Timothens* whom in such respects we ought to follow, and if we will indeed presse forward unto perfection, let this be our marke and then we shall not over-run our little brethren whiles they are in non-age, no though they be a little froward and pettish like children, nor though they think themselves wise and strong, and yet we know them to be weak and foolish; For if we know them to be such, we know them also to be but children and babes in Christianity in comparison with others of a riper standing, for because they are weake, or froward, pettish, or foolish, shall we be so likewise? Do we not shew our selves also to be but children in Christianity as well as they? and are we not so far short of the Apostles practise, and resolution before named? It were but a bad nurse that should so carry towards little children. Compare but such practices with the Apostles, and it will convince. And if we take in also that undeniable example of the Lord himselfe, how he dealt with *Israel* who were a stiff-necked people, and how long he suffered their manners in the wilderness, See *Deut.* 32. 11, 12, 13, 14. How he dealt with them as an Eagle, and bare them on his wings, and lead them in the way through a desert wilderness, feeding them with oyle, and milke, and butter, and honey so as they wanted nothing, neither did he leave them nor forsake them, for all their frowardnesse, till they first forsooke him, and served other gods; though he said of them, *vers.* 20 *They were a very froward generation, children in whom was no faith.* And sure there cannot be much faith in us, whilest we have so little love, and regard so little to obey his first and great commandement, wherein all the whole laws of God, and the ends of them are so clearly contained, and comprehended, so as in obeying them, we cannot choose but fulfill them all, as hath been proved at large from sacred Scriptures.

And

And let us consider also another Scripture or two, *1st 2nd Epil*
5. 29, 30. *He that the Apostle* ever yet hated his own flesh,
 but crucified and destroyed it, even as the Lord doth the Church;
 for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. And he
 gave himselfe for it; that he might sanctifie and cleanse it with the
 washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himselfe a
 glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but
 that it should be holy and without blemish. See ver. 25, 26, 27. Now
 if Christ so loved and hath owned his Church as members of his
 own body, and flesh, and bones, and hath given himselfe for it;
 and made it his business to sanctifie and cleanse it, &c. And if we
 ought to be followers of God as deare children, and to walke in love
 as Christ also hath loved us, As ver. 1, 2. Then doubtlesse we
 ought also to make it our business, and our maiore business of all
 other, to present all the members of his body, the Church per-
 fect, we being also members one of another. (See Chap. 4. 25.)
 as a perfect and glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle, or any
 such thing. And to that end we must let all bitterness, and wrath,
 and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from us;
 with all malice. And be kinde one to another, tender-hearted, for-
 giving one another, even as God for Christs sake, hath forgiven us,
 See Chap. 4. 31, 32.

The Lord open our understandings to consider, and discern
 how much these sacred words of truth and faithfullnesse, concern
 us all in these dayes of ours, for his great namesake, *Amen.*

F. I. N. I. S.

